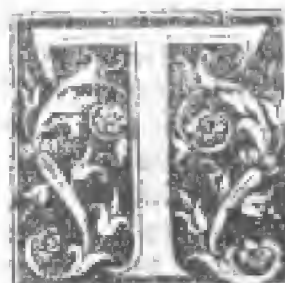


The argument vpon the fyrst

Fol. xlii.

Epistle of thapostle. S. Iohn by Erasmus
of Rotterodam.



That this is Saincte Iohn thapostles epistle, whiche wrote the Gospell, the very stile of the wordes selfe is a playne argument. He maketh muche a dooe in the reherfall of light and darthenes, life and deathe, hate and loue, in often repetinge the wordes, as though they were taken out of the sayinge nexte before. Of the whiche sorte (to open my saying more plainly by example) this is one: Loue not the vworlde, neither those thinges that are in the vworlde. Yf any manne loue the vworlde, the loue of the father is not in hym, for all that is in the vworlde &c. And anon after: He is not of the father, but of the vworlde: and the vworlde passeth awaye. How often here is the worlde reherced: Finally in all hys sayinge there is lesse compendypous shortnes, and more open plainesse than in the wytyng of the reste of thapostles. And as for thepistle, it is more evidently plaine, than nedeth any argumente, like as the two Epistles folowinge are, whiche are ascribed to one Iohn a certain senior, and not to Iohn the apostle.

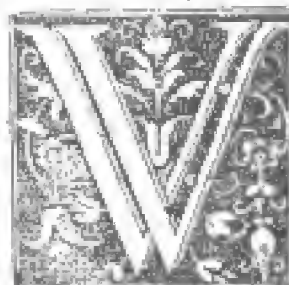
Thus endeth the Argumente.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon on the firste Epistle of Sainct Iohn.

The fyrste Chapter.

That which was from the beginning, which we haue herd, which we haue sene with our eyes, which we haue tokech vpon, and our handes haue handled, of the worde of the lpte. And the lpte appeared, and we haue sene and heare witness, and shewe vnto you that eternall life, which was with the fater, and appeared vnto vs. That whiche we haue sene and hearde, declare we vnto you, that ye also maye haue felowshipp with vs, and that our felowshipp maye be with the father and his sonne Iesus Christ. And thus wrote we vnto you, that (ye maye reioyce, and that ypour ioye may be full.

The text.



I write not vnto you, deately beloued byrthzen, of slender or meane thinges, or of thinges vnknewen, but of a newe matter: howbeit so newe vnto vs, that with God it was from euerlasting. This is the worde of God, euen Iesus Christe bothe God and manne: whiche where he was alwayes the sonne of God, woulde of late be the sonne of a mayden: and which after hys diuine nature was invisible to mans eyes, vouchesafed to take vpon hym an humayne bodye: and did vouchesafe to be familiarly conuersaunt among men, that he might carpe vs vp from the darkenes of our ignorance to the lpyght of Gospellike

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. epistle

pellike knowlage : and that we myght begynne to beholde him with the eyes of our mynde, whome we haue presentlie seene with the eyes of our bodye. In dede the vnbelefe of mannes hatte requyred, that the truthe shoulde bee credited by grosse outward experymentes: but yet the godlynes of them is moze preferred by his owne worde, whiche whate they nerther had seene him with theyr eyes, ne handled him with theyr handes, yet were mooste certainly perswaded and beleued that he is the sonne of God, and thonly auer of mannes saluacyon. It is our patte therfore, to declare that, whiche we haue mooste certainly proued by our bodyly senses, vnto those that chynced not to see it, and yet it is expedyent to beleue, that none ought to trust to haue life, nor euylastinge saluacion, but he that beleueth the Gospelles doctrine, wherof we are both witnessles and preachers. It is not the worde of manne, neither of lyght importauce, but it is the worde of God, and of heauen, that geueth euylastinge lyfe to them, which geue obedient hearyng vnto it: and deliucting from the deathe of synnes, from what so euer telyggon, from what so euer kynde of lyfe they shall turne them selues vnto it. Of this matter y we speake of we speake of mooste assured credence, y is to wote, euen the thing which we y were continual waitours heard with our eares saw with our eyes, nerther sawe we afarre of, or passinge by, but we looked presently on to the full. And to cause a thinge to be credited, there are two principall churc senses, and if that also bee but a small matter, we did not only heare hym teaching, prayinge, commaundyng wyndes and deuilles, and the father soudry tymes bracing witnes vnto the sonne, and we sawe hym not only worke myracles, suffre deathe and ryle agayne: but also we haue handled with these handes of oures. For whan he was risen agayne from deathe, to thynente to make vs beleue stedfastlye that he was no vayne phantasie, but euen the same manne almye agayne, to whome we had seene before dead, he caused vs to handle hym with our handes, and laying to our fygres he shewed vs the places of his woundes. Thankynge was deade, bycause it was in thraldome of vices and synnes: and he suffred deathe for our wickednes, that throught his goodnesse we myght lyue vnto Innocence. We were in doubt also our selues, whan we sawe hym dead, whan we sawe hym buried, but whan he rose againe from deathe, he gaue vs sure hope of life. Thankynge had had no manner of hope of eternall life, except he had caused vs to see hym with oure eyes, and if he had not plucked awaye all doubtefulnes fro vs, by mooste manifestly apparent experymentes. He beinge manne suffred paynes for our synnes, and the same beinge God dooeth scely geue immortall lyfe to them that put theyr saythfull trust in hym. He lyued alwayes with the father, and this life was alwayes determinately purposed for vs by the sonne, howbeit this counsaile was not yet published vnto the world, albeit the nation of the Jewes (and yet none but they) looked for it by the prophetes oracles, as it were in a dyaime. In the meane while deathe reigned, lyfe laye hydden. Some fixed theyr hope in Moses, some in worldly wysdome, but the saluacion and life of all people was Iesus Christe, the worde of God the father, the teacher of Innocence, and the geuer of Immortalitie. For none lyueth, but he that lyueth godly, nerther dooeth any escape deathe, but he that attemyeth Immortalitie. At length thus (Iesus chrylle) manifested him selfe vnto the world by hym selfe, shewing him selfe playnly to all the senses of man, and so thrusting him selfe in to the consciences of menne. And therfore he would haue vs to be lokers on and witnessles of all thinges, that he did on earthe, to thynente

chintent they might be faithfully published by our preachinge throughout all the whole vniuersall world: that like as we by Iesus haue obteyned life and saluacion, in case we perseuer still in the Gospelles doctrine, euen so shoulde you also come with vs in to the felowshippe and company of this saluacion, in case you geue credence to our witnesse bearing, concerning the thinge that you neither hearde nor sawe of hym, but learne it by our preachinge. We are neither dayne witnessees ne yet vncommaunded. He bad vs to bee faithfull witnessees, and we recorde vnto all men with the greate daunger of our head, none other thinge than we haue most euident experience of, with all the senses of the bodye. We are happye, in that our eares and eyes haue made vs beleue, and yet you are neuertheles happye, if you geue credence vnto hys witnesse bearers. Our faith hath glided vs vnto Chryste, and made vs the children of God and membyres of Chryste: And your faith also shall engraft you vnto the same bodye, that beinge ioyned with vs in the felowshippe of faith, you might make one bodye. And so shall it come to passe, that we shall not only bee all of one mynde amonge our selues, as the membyres of one bodye, but we shall also haue peace and loue with Iesus Chryste, and by hym with God hys father, from whome we were before farre different: that like as the sonne is at moste perfecte consent a communion of all thinges with the father, euen so we also by perfecte agreement of the profession of the Gospell shoulde bee heaped togyther in to one bodye of Chryste, to be made partakers of all the goodes of our heade. I know you are iopous of so happye a felowship, but yet I put you in remembraunce agayne of these thinges in wyting, to chintent you might reioyce more fully, if euery manne be not all togyther iopous of hys owne saluacion, but all mens felicitie make euery one glad. For thys dooeth chrysten charitie cause, that euery manne must be as glad of other mennys commodities, as of his owne. The more that this felicitie is commune vnto, the more abundaunt shall euery ones ioye bee. Among vs there shall no bring of one mynde stande togyther substantially, excepte we be fast glued togyther with mutuall charitie. We canne not possibly haue peace with God, except we be answerably like vnto our head Iesus Chryste: what so euer he hath, he ascribeth it vnto the father: and what so euer we haue, it behoueth vs to ascriue it vnto Chryste. Chryste is the true lycht that procedeth from the father of all lycht. We canne not bee the membyres of Chryste, except we bee bryght: nether canne we haue lycht, onles we bee transformed into him, and continue steadfastly vnto the ende in hys felowship. Truth and Innocence is the lycht of the mynde, and synnes and wicked luffes are the darkenes: where lycht is, there is life: where darkenes are, there death is.

And this is the thynges which we haue heard of hym and declare vnto you, that God is light, and in hym is no darkenes at all. If we saye, that we haue felowship with him, and walke in darkenes, we lye, and do not the truth. But and yf we walke in light euen as he is in light, then haue we felowship with him, and the blood of Iesus Christ has sonne cleansed vs from all synne. If we saye that we haue no synne, we deceaue our selues, and the truth is not in vs. If we knowe our synnes, he is lycht full and lust to forgive vs our synnes, and to cleanse vs from all vnrightheines. If we say, we haue not synned, we make hym a lyar, and by synne is not in vs.

The text.

What is the matter than, whiche we shewe vnto you, that you might the more fully reioyce. In dede it is that, whiche we haue heard euen of hym, and
 heauing

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. epistle

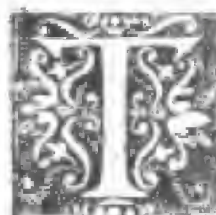
hauing heard it we make it comūe vnto you: that God, forasmuch as he is all
 together and of his own nature good, all wise, all pure, and all light & life, nether
 is ther any darkenes in him. In vs the matter standeth not after such sort, but
 we haue muche darkenes euen of our selues: in case we haue any light, we are
 indebted in that all together vnto him, by whose free liberality we are deliuered
 from our olde synnes, and being deliuered from the darkenes of our former ig-
 norauce we haue learned by the Gospelles doctrine to liue godly after Chyiste
 our heades example. If any manne boast, that he is through baptisme engraf-
 fed to the body of Chyiste, and hath therby felowshippe with God the father:
 where as in the meane while he liueth yet in errors & vices of hys former lyfe,
 dooeth playnly lye. For seeing (as I sayed before) God is farre from all maner
 felowship of darkenes: how can he possibly haue any thyng a doo with hym,
 that lyueth yet still all together in error and olde vices? For he is cleue out of
 the waye, that thinketh he can attayne Innocencie by any other meanes than
 by Chyist: agayne he is deceaued, that thinketh it enough for him to be washen
 in baptisme, except he be answerably like vnto his professid through Innocen-
 cie of life: he that thinketh thus, is deceaued, and he leeth that sayeth it. For
 Chyiste is the truely, whiche hath nothing a doo with lyers. The fyrst steppe
 vnto light, is for a manne to acknowlage his darkenes: and the fyrst stepping
 forth of a manne vnto Innocencie, is to acknowlage his synnes. Will ye heare
 therfore, by what token we maye knowe, that we haue true felowshippe with
 God? Doubtes euen by this: if like as he is light, and vnder of all darkenes,
 euen so shall we abstepne after his example from the darkenes of all errors
 and vices, framing all our conuersacion after the light of the Gospel: and yf
 like as the sonne hath most high conuoyde with the father: euen so shoulde we
 also lyue Innocently and be all of one mynde amonge our selues. The father
 will not lape the transgressions of our olde lyfe vnto our charge, whiche are
 ones doone awaye all the sorte of them by the precious blood of his sonne Je-
 su Chyiste, so that we from henceforthe abstepne from all synne, as muche as in
 vs lyeth. The blood of Chyiste hath washed awaye all synnes, and hath
 washen it away from all folkes: yea but he hath washed none but those that
 acknowlage theyr faultes. Yf we saye that we are not enchaunged with synne,
 we deceaue our selues, we lyue in error, we wandie in darkenes: and Chyiste,
 which is light, which is truely, is not in vs. For if he were truly in vs in orde,
 he woulde dispatche awaye this darkenes of arrogant ignorance. And if it
 shall chaunce vs after receyuing of baptisme, to fynde backe agayne through
 mannes weaknes in to any synne, and as it were, a myste obscure our light: we
 muste beware, that arrogancie withdraue vs not farther and farther of, and
 leade vs agayne from light in to our olde darkenes. Yea we muste geue dili-
 gence, that through discrete sobrietye we maye be adioyned vnto the light, that
 shall dispatche awaye all darknes. If the brother perchauce doo trespasse a-
 gainste the brother, let either forgene other hys trespasse, that God maye
 forgene them also the trespases that are done against him. For in dede God
 hath vpon this condicion promysed to forgene vs: what so euer we haue of-
 fended against him, if we forgene our brothers fault: and etacteth hys debte
 (euen to the uttermoste farthinge) of him, whiche hauing hys lord mercifull
 vnto him, shewed him selfe finally mercifull towards his felowe seruaunt: that
 is to saye, he iudgeth him unworthy the merce of God seeing he ones frely
 forgave

forgaue him all his trespasses, that will not pardone a smale offence bnd hym, agaynst whome he eyther trespasseth euey daye, or elles maye trespasse. That man wyl easily forgaue hym that trespasseth agaynst hym, whiche wyl remembre howe many wayes he offendeth both agaynst God and agaynst his neyghbour: And as it is a very hard matter for a man to do so as he offende in nothing, euen so is it a verie eayse matter to amende suche offences with forgaueing one an other. forgaue thou thy neyghbour, and thy neyghbour shall forgaue thee agayne: and God shall, euen as it were of very couenaunt, forgaue you both. I speake of those faultes, that chaunce euen among them that are good, yea but among men: and those faultes, that obscure the lyght of the Gospelles veritie, rather than erem: gnythe it. For God forbiddeth, that man laughter, or whoyedome, or sacrilege shoulde chaunce vpon their life, that are ones chosen among the chyldren of God. There is nothing that allureth more the mercie of God, and swagerth his wrath, than yf a man acknowlage his faulte to God. If he that is a fearce cruel man forgaue him that acknowlageth his faulte, howe muche more shall God do so, which is more mercifull than any man: he is by nature readly bent vnto mercie, and hath promised vs forgaueines by: on this condicion: forgaue, and it shalbe forgiven vnto you. If he would not forgaue, in that he is good: yet he shuld forgaue because he is iust & of faithful credence. See that thou accompythe the prescribed condicion, and he shal not forget his couenaunt. If we with our whole harte forgaue our neyghbour that offendeth vs, God shall also forgaue vs, not onely one synne or an other, but all synnes: so that we to our powers geue diligence, that we may be once boyde of all bices. And yf we be not able fully to attayne vnto that for the fraytile of mannes body, yet he of his liberal free goodnes shal make good, that is wantynge in our strengthes, and shall cleaue vs from all our offences, who perchaunce suffereth some tokens of our olde former lyfe to remayne stil in vs, for this purpose, that we shoulde acknowlage our weakenes. For in dede he is better content with a sinner that misliketh himselfe, than with a righteous that ma standeth in his own conserue. He would that y saluacion of men shoulde be ascribed vnto his mercy, and not to our merytes. And nowe harhe he testified, that there is no mortall manne on yearth, but he offendeth in some thyng. And yf we wyl say, that we haue no synne in vs, we make wode a lyar, and say agaynst hym: and he that sayeth, sayeth hym must nedes lye.

The.ii. Chapter.

My lytle chyldren, these thynges sayeth I vnto you, that ye synne not. And yf any manne The crye: since, we haue an aduocate with the father, Iesus Christ the righteous: and he it is that obteyneth grace for our synnes: not for our synnes onely, but also for the synnes of all the world. And hereby we are sure that he knoweth hym, yf we kepe his commandementes. He that sayeth, I knowe hym, and keepeth not his commandementes, is a lyar, and the veritie is not in hym. But whoso keepeth his word, in hym is the loue of God perfect: in dede: hereby we know that we are in hym. He that sayeth, he abydeth in hym, ought to walke as he walketh.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle



These thynges do I wyte, my lytle chyldren, not that synne should be comitted the more licenciously vpon truste of the mercye that is ordayned, but that no man shoulde synne at all, as muche as in vs lyeth. After that Christ hath once forgiven vs all oure transgressions, it is requisite for vs to applie al our studious endeouours to this ende, that we may kepe innocencie vndefiled. And yet if it chaunce vs to slide backe agayne into any synne, ther is no cause why we should despayre of forgiveness, we haue God freereable, & with hym we haue a louing patrone & a trusty, who being the sonne, obteyneth whatsoeuer he wyll of the father, and wisheth hartely wel vnto vs: which gaue hymselfe to saue vs, so that we do bitterly and from the botome of our heartes mislike our felows, and geue our diligence agayne to better. He alone hath nothing to be pardoned of, and he it is that maketh intercession for the synnes of his members, and reconcileth the father (whiche is offended) vnto vs, and causeth hym to bee mercyfull vnto vs: & not vnto vs onely, which haue now embraced his doctrine, but also vnto all mankynde vniuersally, yf they with a syncre hearte confesse themselves to be sinners, and purpose to leade an innocent lyfe, and so purposed go on forwarde, and kepe it substantially. For baptism doeth not make vs free from the obseruation of Moses law for that purpose, that we shoulde synne afterwarde licenciously without punishment, but that we shoulde more strictly stycke to the loue of the Gospell, whiche causeth more to be done of the wyllynge, than so many lawes of Moses gette perforce of the constrained. He commaunded many thynges in a smal rowme, that commaunded men to loue their neighbours, euen as he dyd vs. He dyueth not vs to loue hym agayne, but he enticeth vs, he prouoketh vs, he kindleth vs. Whosoever knoweth God aright, cannot choise but loue hym vehemently. For euery one that professeth God with his mouthe, knoweth not God: but he that is bryndled with the flame of gospellyke charitie, and doeth wyllinglye and gladly, that whiche he dyd perfirly before, that we do good euen vnto our enemies, and that for the saluacion of our neyghbour we wyll not stycke to stand in danger of our life, he declareth hymselfe to know god. But as if a man make his boaste, that he knoweth god, in that, that he bringe taught his principles hath learned the misteries of the fawch, in that besyng baptised he hath professed his name, neither for al that foloweth the example of his charitie, he is a lyar, neither hath he yet fully learned to knowe God, in as muche as god is not known, excepte saythe he garnished with charitie. And whosoever is a lyar, Christ whiche is the very trouth selfe, dwelleth not in hym: and whosoever hath not Christ dwelling in hym, is not a lively membre of his body. Faith without loue is a bayne matter and a deade. To bee hoze, loue is not idle, it omitteth none of those thynges, that it knoweth be acceptable vnto hym who it loueth. Christ sayd he would not acknowlage hym to be his disciple, that woulde not take vp his crosse and folow hym, walkyng in þe forsteppes of perfite charitie. Therfore he that obserueth his saying, declareth in dede that he holdeth fast the perfite and ryght euangelical charitie. By trial herof we shal know, that we are in his body, & that we haue receyued his spirit. Wherto doest þu make thy baunt, as a member of Christe, in that thou art through baptism receyued into the flock of christians? It is not an idle professiō, it is a not fynesingred professiō.

It is

It is not the profession that maketh a true membre of Christe, but the imitation. He that professeth with his mouth that he is regenerate in Christ, must walke in his footsteps. He lyued not to him selfe, he died not for himselfe: he gaue himselfe wholly for vs, he dyd good to all folkes, he gaue no reuylinge worde agayne to any man, but whan he was naped on the crosse, he prayed to the father for them that spake reuylingly agaynste him. This is the gospelike and perfite charitie, whiche they ought to followe in their dedes, that professethem selues to be Christes disciples.

But then, I write no newe commaundement vnto you: but that olde commaundement, which ye haue had from the beginning. The olde commaundement is the worde, wh. ch. ye haue heard from the beginning. Agayne, a newe commaundement I write vnto you, that is telle in hym, and the same is true also in you: for the darkenes is past, and the true lighte nowe shyneth. He that saith herbe that he is in the light, and yet hateth his brother, is in darkenes euen vntill this tyme. He that loueth his brother, abydeth in the light, and there is none occasion of euill in him. He that hateth his brother, is in darkenes, and walketh in darkenes: and can not tell whither he goeth, because that darkenes hath blinded his eyes.

The next.

Dearely beloued, thys commaundement of charitie, that I wyte vnto you, is no newe commaundemente, but euen Moses lawe declared it long agoe, or rather Christe by it, whiche renewed his commaundement in the gospel: and so renewed it, that he made it peculiarly his owne. This (quod he) is my commaundement, that you shoulde loue one another, as I haue loued you.

Therefore it is neither any newe commaundement, neither my commaundement, that I geue now vnto you, ne yet suche a one as you haue not heard of hitherto, but it is the selfe same commaundemente, that we gaue vnto you by and by in the begynnyng by thautozpye of Christe. And yet agayne the same is newe that I write nowe vnto you. It was an olde commaundement, but it is brought out of vse through the maners of the people.

The Jewes learned by heart: Thou shalt loue the Lord thy god, thou shalt loue thy neighbour, but yet euery one serued his own gaine. Christ renewed thys vnto vs, yea and loued vs more than himselfe, and he loued not his neighbours, but he loued his enemies, yea those that turned waywardly from him and that were worthy of euill. This albeit I knowe you haue heard of, long agoe, yet it ought to be renewed from tyme to tyme with often rehearsal, that it maye sticke the more depely in youre mynde, sring it is the chief matter of the gospels profession. This was a true commaundement in Christ, which performed in dede the thyng that he taught: but it was not true in you, as long as you hated your neighbour, as long as you recompenced euill worde for euill worde, and wrong for wrong. But now it is true in you also, sence the true sprong by lighte of the gospels doctrine hath dispatched awaye þe darkenes of your former life, & hath taught that none is acceptable, but he that would loue the good for Christes sake, & loue the also that are bad to this ende, that they should be conuerted vnto Christ. Those that folowe this doctrine, walke in lighte, & offende not in the darkenes of euill lustes. The hate of the neighbour powereth darkenes into the mynd. Therefore he that is so washē and so hath professed Christ, that he geueth not ouer to hate his brother, he is deceaued in beleuyng that he walketh in light, where he is yet in darkenes. For God remitteth not him, & forgueth not his brother. For it is not ynoughe to haue geuen ouer the ft, whoredom & murdre, in baptisme, except al holo hartednes be also plucked quite out of þe mynd, & in stede of hate, charitie come in place.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle

He that contemmeth still in the loue of hys neyghbour, abydeth in lycht, which is Christ Iesus, and stumblcth not as walking in darknes: For true charitie is so faire of from hurtyng any body, that it suffreth all thynges, and turneth all thynges into good. Contrarywyse he that hateth his brother, although he haue geuen ouer to offer vnto images, although he haue geue ouer to be an vniour or a church robber, yet he is styl in darknes, & seruing his owne blynde lustes he walketh in darknes: neyther seeth he the strayght waye vnto saluacion, although the gospel thyn clearly vpon him. And all is long of the darknes of the hate of his brother, that hath so blynded his eyes. Where hate reigneth, there is the iudgement blynde.

Thereto.

Wabes, I wrote vnto you helpe that your sinnes are forgiven you for his names sake. I wrote vnto you fathers, helpe that you haue known him that is from the beginning. I wrote vnto you yongmen, helpe that ye haue overcome that wicked. I wrote vnto you litle children, helpe that ye haue known the father. I haue written vnto you fathers, helpe that ye haue known him that is from the beginning. I haue written vnto you yonge men, helpe that ye are strong, and the worde of god abydeth in you, and ye haue overcome that wicked. He that ye loue not the world, neither the thinges that are in the world. If any man loue the world, the loue of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world (as the lust of the fleshe, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life) is not of the father, but of the world. And the world passeth awaye, and the lust thereof: but he that fulfilleth the will of God, abydeth for ever.

I loue you euen as a mother loueth her children, and write for that purpose, partly reioycyng at your felicitie, partly exhortyng you to goe forward better and better. I reioyce at you, as my most deare children, whom I haue begotten agayne by the fede of the gospels doctrine vnto Christ, in that the synnes of your former lyfe are pardoned you, and freely pardoned you, for none other cause, but because you haue professed the name of the lord Iesu Christ, that you shoulde also remembre after his example freely to forgive euery one his neyghbour. I write vnto you, whom not so muche the processe of age as the grauitie of maners and godly carefulnesse towarde them that be yonger, doeth make worthy the name of fathers: reioycing in you, that you are not onely endued with a commune manner of wisdom, wherby olde men are commended almost because of the experience of thinges, and geue the better counsel to the ignorant yong folkes, but in that you haue reknowledged Iesus Christe the autor of saluacion: whiche not onely is of a greate olde age, but also hath bene alwayes with the father. You being of great age knowe him that is eternal: and the more fully you knowe him, so much the more diligently you preache him to them that be of slenderer age. Olde folkes do remembre and kepe in mynde many olde ancient thynges, and you kepe him in mynde that was before al age. I write vnto you yongmen which through the strength of faith haue overcome that wicked & vniuly Satan. The commune sorte of yongmen thinketh themselves happie in that they geue lightly place to no mā because of their bodyly strength. But you are more happie, that by reason of your strength of mynde, you could be overcome, neither with enticementes of voluptuous pleasures, ne w any terrors of þ world. Other mens accuities flourisheth in battail, but your actiuitie hath flourished more nobly against the assaultes of devils, the fleshe, & the world. I write vnto you children, which although for tendernes of your yeares, you are not skilled as yet in þ knowlage of worldly matters, yet you haue already attained the thig, þ getteth you euertlastig felicitie. In other childre it is þ first special tokē of wit, if they acknowledge they?

their father, but you knowe your heavenly father, by whom you are regenerate vnto heauen. Let euery one maynteyne that he hath, and encrease in that he hath. For this cause sake, I bothe reioyce in euery one, and also warne all and euery orders and states of you, that acknowledgeng your felicitie, you geue thanks to God your autour, and haryng in remembrance, whither you must go, preace alwayes forwarde vnto more perfection. I wil rehearse it vnto you therfore, that ye can not forget it. I haue written vnto you fathers, for you knowe him which hath neyther beginning nor endyng, that the desyre of this lyfe shoud in no wyse stiere you, fryng you make haste to the life that neuer shal haue ende. I haue written vnto you yongmen, because you haue overcome the rustynge nyeneite of youth through the balaunt strengthe of mynde, and because you haue with a constaunt heart kepte the worde of the Gospell, and haue by the helpe of Christ, overcome the Deuill the continuall enemye of mankynde. Continue you still in victorye, condemne still that wyche you haue hitherto condemned, and loue more and more that you haue begon to loue. The worlde conuertyth by false imaginacions of transitorye goodes, and frayeth with a bayne and false shewe of euilles. As for you, let those thynges fraye you whiche are euill in dede, and neuer haue ende. And let those thynges carthe you that are good in dede and knowe none ende. Followe the lyght of the gospell and loue heauenly thynges, whiche the heauenly father promyseth, vnto whom you are regenerate by Christ. flee the darknes of naughtie lusses, wherby this worlde layeth bayte with countrefaict goodes. It can not possiblie be, that you can loue bothe at ones, nor serue both at ones. There is none agreement betwene God and the worlde, there is no concorde betwene lyght and darknes: whosoener loneth the worlde, swarweth from the loue of God the father. I speake not of this worlde, which god made, wherin we liue, wyl we wyl we. The wiked greedy desires of vayne thynges (wherein the common sort of menne repose their felicitie, forgetting the thynges that are truly good in dede) I cal the worlde. It is not the place, howe farre of so euer it be, nor the rayment, nor the meate, nor the ritle, that exempteth you fro the worlde, but a mind that is pure fro those desires & I speake of. And what hath this worlde, that is not noisomly hurtful? There are thre thynges, & it most chesely deceiueth folithe & vncircumspect folkes withall: the voluptuous pleasure of the fleche, enticementes of the eyes, and hyghe statelynes and proude galaunties of lyfe. For it obiecteth certayne iugginges of vayne pleasures to clawe the senses of the bodye withall for a tyme, that the mynde maye in the meane while be called awaye from the studie of heauenly good thynges. For the desyre of suche maner of good thynges, the heauenly spirite suggesteth, whom God the father geueth vnto his chyldre that are truly regenerate by Christ. The deuill hath also a spirite of his owne, by whom he suggesteth a pernicious loue of thynges neyther true nor durable, vnto them that haue bent themselves througely vnto this worlde. he suggesteth the naughtye & oures of lechery, to tulle the members of the bodye withall through a folithe and a filthy itching desire. he suggesteth the desire of fyne meates & drinke to please & paunche & the mouth wyl. he suggesteth the swetnes of idlenes & slepe, that the mynde may waxe the more sluggish through custom.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle

He suggesteth wanton songs and chameles fables, to annoynt the cares withall. He suggesteth the wanton enticementes of beauties and sondry kyndes of thynges to beholde, to delite the eyes withall. He suggesteth the pompes and ioyfull of riches, the occasions of ambition. Finally he allureth mennes myndes on euery parte awaye from the true and euerclasting good thynges, vnto the vayne imaginacions of good thynges. Let him that is entangled with the desire of these thynges, knowe that he is not moued by the spirite of the heauenly father, but by the spirite of the worlde. The worlde, lyke as it consisteth vpon elementes that endure but for a tyme, euen so geueth it nothing but that whiche shall shortly perishe. God, like as he is eternall, euen so geueth he freely euerclasting rewardes. Therefore he that dependeth vpon the succours of the worlde, foloweth a certayne felicitie that is both vayne and shall shortly be taken awaie, which, euen casualtie that comureth without thought vpon, plucketh awaye in this worlde, or at lest age dispatcheth it. Truly, death that shall come vnto euery man, plucketh quite awaye al the dreame of false pleasures. When the matter is taken awaye, the pleasure perissheth, and sorowes come in place. When the man is taken away, al is gone to naught, and euerclasting torment cometh in place. But he that obeierth vnto the father that calleth him vnto the lone of an heauenly lyfe, his felicitie shall neuer haue ende. For he that geneth it, knoweth none ende. The vnhurtfull commodities of this worlde are to be vsed for the tyme, yea but smallye, but moderately, to the necessitie of nature, not to the voluptuousse fulfilling of pleasure. But the chiefe Ruyde of mynde ought to be turned to the thynges that be eternall, whereunto the vse of all other thynges ought also to be referred.

The text.

Intel children, it is the last tyme: and as ye haue heard howe that Antichrist shall come, euen now are there many begonne to be Antichrists already: whereby we knowe, that it is the laste tyme. They went out from vs, but they were not of vs. For if they had bene of vs they would not doubt, haue communed with vs. But that it might appere, that they were not of vs. Reuerendes, ye haue an opinion of him that is holy, and ye knowe all thynges. I haue not written vnto you, as though ye knewe not the truth: but as though ye knewe it, and knowe also, that noire comureth of truth. Who is a lyer, but he that denieth that Iesus is Christ? the feneits Antichriste, that denieth the father and the sonne. Whosoever denieth the sonne, the same hath not the father, he that knoweth geth the sonne, hath the father also. Let therefore abyde in you that same which ye heard from the begynnyng.

The felicitie of godly men doeth not yet appeare, but it shall be manifestly opened in the comyng of our Lorde Iesu Christ. The wicked seme to lyue in the meane tyme sweetely here in this worlde, but euerclasting sorowe ha ngeth ouer them and that shortly. For the laste tyme semeth to be present, wherein (the course of thynges being turned bpsyde downe,) those shall rayne with Christ, that are tormented now for Christs sake: and they shall be brought to naught, whiche be now rebellles agaynst Christ. You haue heard that Antichrist shall come, who being armed with all the mayntenance and iugglinges of this worlde, shoulde kepe warre against Christ, and by and by when Antichriste is overcome againe, the body of Christ shall be deliuered from all euils, and the members of the deuill shall be laden with the burthens of all euilles. Therefore the comyng of this Antichrist, (of whom the Apostles tolde you before) semeth not to be farre

of. For thes wolde hath so muche preyayled agaynst the doctrine of the Gospel, that there are begonne even now all ready to be a great soye, that deserue the name of Antichrist, whose lyfe and doctrine and all theyr whole study is agaynst Christ. For what appeare they to be elles, thā Antichristes gentlemen husfiers, and the last tokens of the plage to come? For they do lesse hurt vnto Christes people that be utterly strangers from Christ, than those that being ones conuersant in his castelles, and by and by become runnegates, assault Christe with Equilles owne garisons and armour. For they countrefaite even those thinges, whiche declare in Christians, the vertue, the holynes, the doctrine, the auctoritie, the miracles of Christ. And in dede they went out of vs, howbeit there is no matter, why they should much trouble you, they were conuersant among vs, but they were none of ours. They were enemies of Christe, even whan they were dwelling in his castelles. But and if they had truly bene on our syde, they would haue continued still to thende with vs. They professed Christ in title and behauiour, but in their mynde they loued the worlde vehemently. And therfore when it is come to the stormes of persecutions, whan it is come to the flame of afflictions, they haue shewed theselues, what they were before. Nowe they are out from vs, they extolie vs, as a body ouerlaided with euil humours, and now being open enemies they shall lesse hurt, than holow harted companions. Thus it was Christes wyll, that it may evidently appeare, that all belonge not to the bodye of Christe, that are washen in his name, that professe his name, and are partakers of the sacramentes of the Churche. A true and stedfast despising of the worlde sheweth a man to be a Christian. A mynde that is unbroken and unconquered agaynst al wanton enticemētes, agaynst all iniuries, sheweth a man to be a Christian. He that vpon occasion thynketh from the doctrine of Christe, byd countrefaite a chritianne, but he was no christian. In dede it is expedient that they be openly seperated from vs, lest in ourward appearaunce seming to be good, they should do the more harme to them that are not ware. Although they were not vnknown vnto you, yea before they withdrew themselves openly. For the buccion of Christ, wherof you are also named, that is to saye the inspiration of the spirite of Christ, sheweth playnly ymonge who are true christians, and who are not. For he that is a spirituall man, iudgeth al thynges. They were not vnknown, but they were bozne with al, if perchaunce they wolde repent. It is true that I saye: neither doe I wyte these thinges vnto you, as though you were ignorant of the truth, saying you haue the spirite of Christ to your teacher, which suffereth you not to be ignorant of any thing: but I put you in remembraunce of the thyng that you know, to chintent you myght s more surely sticke vnto the truth, and not to be disquieted whan sorowes do happen. You are the fewer, but you are the sounder, you are the more purely cleused, you are the quicter. Nothing is taken away of the body, though the botche be launced, though the corrupt matter be ronne out. You knowe that Christ is the truth, and all kynde of lyeng is cleane contrarie to him. Whosoener is an holow harted dissembler, with him Christe hath nothing a doe, howe faile so euer he professe him with his mouthe. There are manye fashons of lyenges. He that is a lyar, by what maner waye soener it be, denieth Christe, whiche is

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

the truth, and receyuest no mixture of any kinde of lye. He that is agaynst the truth, is agaynst Christ: he that is agaynst Christ is Antichrist. And there is none more wicked a kinde of lying, than to denie that Iesus is Christ: and that do many false prophetes of the Iewes, whiche denie hym to be he, whom Moses and the prophetes oracles did long agoe promise vnto the worlde to be the reuenger, and auer of saluacion: and promise an other Antichrist I wrote not whom, in stede of Christ. Doubtes who so euer is such a one, is playne Antichrist. Agayne there are, that although they professe with their mouthe, that Iesus is Christ, yet they lyue after such sort, as though his doctrine were bayne, as though the rewarde that he hath promised were bayne. He taught, that the poore in spirite are blessed, because the kyngdome of heauen abyeth for them. And an other man which applieth al his whole forcast to this end, to enlarge his landes, to buyde royall houses, to enhance his rentes, to stuffe his cofers with money gotten by hoke and by crooke, to be aloft in auctoritie, to oppresse the poore, and to exercise tyrannie: doeth he not cleane contrary vnto Christ, whose doctrine he maketh a lyar, as much as in hym lyeth. Christ taught that they are blessed, whiche hunger and thirst after righteuousnes: and an other repositeth his felicitie in ryot, in the pleasures of the paunch and bely chere: doeth he not denie Christ? He teacheth, that the meke are blessed, because they shall possesse that heavenly lande, from whence they can not be cast downe. And an other man thinketh him happye, yf he can with oppressing of the poore establishe his owne wealth. He teacheth that they are blessed, whiche mourne in this world, because euerclasting comforte is due vnto them. And an other man that in all thynges foloweth the delicate pleasures of this worlde: doeth he not denie Christ? He teacheth, that they are blessed, whiche are mercifull towards their neyghbours. And this ma pleaseth him selfe, because of his owne accorde he doeth him selfe that is better than himselfe. Christ teacheth that they are blessed, whiche are vexed with reuyling wordes and afflictions for the righteuousnes of the Gospelles sake. And this man forcasteth with al maner of dissembling and wyles to please the world. Christ acknowledgeth him for his disciple, that taketh vp his crosse on his shoulders, and foloweth him. And an other man thinketh himselfe neuertheles christen man, if he escape all grief.

Christe sayeth vnto his: *In the y^e worlde you shall haue oppression, but in me you shall haue peace:* and yet vnto these men Christ is heauie, & the worlde swere. He commaundetly to do good euen vnto a mannes enemye, and an other doth wrong to a man without deserte. Worth not he, that lyueth after such sorte, resistingly denie Christ: his mouth sayeth not agaynst him, but his life doth. Sohan the sonne taught agaynst these maners, the father sayed: *Heare him.* But what sayeth this manne? No, heare not him, it is harde graue that he teacheth, heare the worlde. Therefore like as he resisteth the sonne, euen so doeth he repugne agaynst the father, and seynge he is of the facion of the worlde, he disserueth himselfe from the flocke of them, whom Christ hath choen out of this worlde. Christe hath nothing a doe with this worlde, and he that gluethe himself vnto it, repugnech agaynst Christ, and playeth Antichrist, and denieth both the father and the sonne. For the father and the sonne are of an inseperable societie. Here the Iewe
wyl

we'll crye with open mouthe agaynste me : I acknowlage the father, but the sonne I acknowlage not. But what soeuer thou trespacest agaynst the sonne, thou trespacest the same agaynst the father. The sonne neuer did nor taughte any thing, but by the auctoritie of the father. He that taketh from the sonne, taketh from the father. Therefore he that estraugeth him selfe from the felowship of the sonne, he neither pertaينeth to the body of Christ, whiche is the catholike church, nor hath felowshippe with God the father, whiche agreeth in all thinges with the sonne. You see with what great Jeopardie soles disceuer themselves from the sonne. Therefore continue you still in the gospelles truerh, which you receiued first of the surely tried Apostles. Let not the lying tales of the false Apostles drawe you awaye.

If thou wilt, if thou heareste from the begynnynge shall remayne in you, ye also shall conuynce in the sonne, and in the father. And this is the promise that he hath promised vs, euen eternall lyfe. These thinges haue I written vnto you, concerninge them that deceaue you. And the anoynting which ye haue receiued of him, dwelleth in you. And ye neede not, that anye manne teache you: for as the anoynting teacheth you of all thinges, and is true, and no lye, and as it hath taught you, euen so abide therein. And note babes abyde in him: that when he shall appeare we may be bold, and not be made ashamed of him at his coming: if ye knowe that he is righteous, knowe also that every one which doth righteouslynes, is borne of him.

The xxi.

If you continue stedfast in that thyng whiche we deliuered first vnto you, you shall abyde in the felowship of God the father and of his sonne Iesus. If anye man thynke it an harde matter to perseuer in the professynge of the Gospel, because of the afflictions of the wicked, thinke vpon the rewarde. God requireth an harde matter, but the rewarde is greate that he promyseth. For he promyseth neither riches, nor kyngdome, neither the pleasure of this worlde, but lyfe euerlastynge. He that byeth that, byeth it good chepe, although he lose his life for it. These thinges doe I heare vpon, and put you in remembraunce of with so many wordes, beinge carefull, lest the wicked, that are gone from Christ, shoulde chaunce to beguyle anye wyth theyr suglynge. Albeit without our watynge, I thynke the spirite of Christ him selfe teacheth you sufficiently, whom you haue a continuall remembraunce and teacher in poure heartes. As longe as he continueth still in you, it is no neede, that any man teache you, what you ought to anoyde. He is a secret teacher, but he is the most sure teacher of all other. He beinge once receiued of you, teacheth you of all thinges, like as the sonne hath also promysed. For the spirite is true by nature, and can not lye. Therefore perseuer in that, whiche he hath ouer taught you. You holde the ryghte doctrine, you remembre it, there lacketh nothing, but that you persist still in it vnto the coming of Christ, which I suppose, is not farre to. I beseeche you esteemes a gayne, lytle children, persist in the doctrine of the spirite, that when our prince and iudge shall appeare, the conscience of a good conuersacion maye geue vs a sure trust in him, and that we maye come forth so, as he be not ashamed to acknowledge vs for his disciples, nor we ashamed to come in to his syghte. For with what mouth shall we call hym myster and Lorde, if we haue neyther taken heede to his teachinge, nor obeyed his commaundement? With what mouth shall we call God father, if we be out of kynde in all our life longe fro his ordinaunces? It is not simple baptisme, but the obserued righteouslynes, that maketh vs the children of God. For what shall they heare, that cast out druyelles in the name

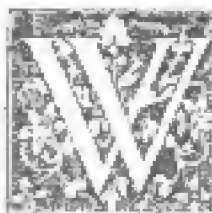
The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

name of Iesu, that tolde thynges befoze hande, that excelled in miracles: I knowe you not. He taketh the foz strangers, in who he seeth not the righte-
ousnes of the gospel. And if you be perauaded, þ God is the authoz of thys
righteousnes, know this also, that whosoeuer not with wordes, but with
endouours, doynges and maners accomplysheth the ryghteousnes of the
Gospel, he is borne of God, vnto whom he maye with a good conscience
pzeace with that boldenes, that obedient childzen are wonte to pzeace to
a mercyfull father withall. He wyll acknowlage them that are lyke hym,
but those that are not lyke hym, he will not acknowlage.

The.iii. Chapter.

The text

Schole, what loue the father hath shewed on vs, that we shoulde be called and be in dede)
the sonnes of God. For this cause the world knoweth you not, because it knoweth not hym.
Dearely beloved, now are we the sonnes of God, and yet it doeth not appeare, what we shalbe.
But we knowe, that when it shall appeare, we shalbe lyke hym. For we shall see hym as he is.
And eueri man that hath this hope in hym, pouergeth hym selfe, euen as he also is pure. Who-
soeuer committeth sinne, committeth vnyghteousnes also, and sinne is vnyghteousnes. And
pe knowe that he appeared, to take away oure synnes, and in hym is no synne. As many as
hede in hym sinne not: whosoeuer sinneth, hath not seue hym, neither knowen hym.



Where sincere loue is, there is a trusty confidence, and feare is
awaye. See therefore what a notable loue he hath geuen
vnto vs, whiche hauing contemned the worlde with his en-
uilementes and terrours, perseuer sty in the gospelles doc-
trine, that we shoulde be named and be, not onely faythfull
seruauntes, not onely frendes, but the childzen of God. for
so Christ taught, that we shoulde cal vpo the heuely father, yf we haue nede
of any thyng. It is a mooste high honour to be called the childzen of God,
and a mooste high felicitie to be the childzen of God. And forasmuche as we
cleane vnto hym with a constant godlynes, and are acknowleged of hym,
the world acknowlegeth vs not, but abhorreth and curseth vs as sedicious
persons. It is no meruayle though the world acknowlage not þ childze of
God, seing it acknowlageth not God himselfe, in that it denieth his soane
Iesus: let it nothing trouble your mindes, dearely beloved, that the world
esteemeth you as rascalles and abiecte persones. for with God we haue
euen now thys excellent dignitie, that we are the sonnes of God, and are
glad at our heartes, seing in our selues the spirite, not of bondage but
of childzen, vpon assured confidence wherof we crye, abba, father. The dig-
nitie is present, but the dignitie hath not yet appeared. As yet it is the tyme
of batayle, the daye of triumphe is not yet come. That daye shall declare
vnto all men, howe greate a dignitie they haue, howe greate a felicitie they
haue, that constantly shewe themselves the childzen of God. It is not yet
come to lyyht, what we shalbe in the comyng of Christ, howbeit we hold
thys vpon a sure hope, that as soone as he shall appeare, to rendre vnto e-
uery one rewardes accordinge to hys dedes, we that were in this worlde
companions of afflictions, shal also be companions of the ioyes: a we that
were lyke hym in the contempte of the worlde, shalbe lyke hym also in the
maiestie of glozre. We saue hym here in thys world afflicted, and of lowe
estate

estate: then that we see him as he is, and euër was, hygh and excellēt: and so
 seynge hym we shall also be transformed vnto hys lyknes, not onely in
 myndes, but also in bodyes. And we see hym now, howbeit, as it were
 through a myll with the eyes of fayth. But then we shall see hym after such
 maner as cannot be expressed. But that thyng, whiche we shall see then per-
 fitely, we must forcast now in the meane tyme to the uttermost of our possi-
 ble power. To thinsēt we may be like hi thē in glory, let vs be pure here frō
 all fylthynges. To thinsēt we maye see hym than, lette vs cleane our eies
 now, lest when he shall appeare glisterynge bryght, he bee vnto vs more
 dreadfull than amiable. For he is not fortunatlye sene, but of them that
 are lyke hym. Therefore whosoener hath thys confidence in Christe, that
 he shall than be a companion of his glory, let hym in the meane tyme pouрге
 hymselfe with godly sudyces cleane from worldlye affections, lyke as in
 hym was no maner of fylthynges of thys world, but is all together pure
 and heauynlye. Therefore it standeth vs in hande with all our possible
 powers, to bend our endeuous to thys ende, that nothing remayne in vs
 of yearthye dregges. And lette no manne flatter hym selfe, sayinge: I: is
 ynough for me vnto innocency, if I trasgresse in none of those thinges that
 Moses lawe forbyddeth, nor in those thynges that are punished by the
 kynges lawes, as felonye, sacrilege, adultrie, murdye: but all maner of
 synne is utterly to be eschewed. For whosoener offendeth by any meane,
 although he offende not agaynst the pierscriptes of Moses, yet he synneth
 agaynst the lawe of the gospel, whiche is a greate deale holper than Mo-
 ses law. And for thys cause sake, Christ came once into the world, to shew
 the waye, whereby his comynge agayne shoulde become hole some and
 luckye vnto vs. He came to take awaye chere for all nor one synne or thoo,
 but al our synnes, where he onely was subiect vnto no maner of synne. He
 once purged vs frely from all synne, to make vs lyke manered vnto hym-
 selfe, whiche neither any lawe nor any mortall man coulde be hable to do.
 Through baptisme we are engrafted into hys holy sacred body. But it is
 our part for all that to endeuour in the meane tyme, that we fall not from
 our head. We are engrafted through his owne free mercy, but we shall fall
 awaye, if we styde backe agayne into oure olde blyes. He that abydeth in
 Christ, perseuereth in innocency, and is wonderous ware to shunne from
 all synne, that he maye dayly more and more growe in vertues, and be made
 more lyke hys head. He that absteyneth not from synnes, although he bee
 baptised, although he be called a christian, hath not yet sene fully, nor yet
 knowen hym. For who is it, yf he saye with the eyes of fayth, what greate
 dignitie it is to be chosen into the numbre of the sonnes of God, and what
 a fylthy shame it is to be geuen to the father deuyll, that woulde abyde to
 be plucked awaye from suche a bodye, to departe from suche a father, and
 to go out of kynde vnto so fylthy a tyrannye, to styde of his owne accorde
 awaye from so hygh rewardes vnto so greate miserie?

Debes, If ite no man deceyue you, he that doeth righteousnes, is righteous, euen as he is
 righteous. He that committeth synne, is of the deuyll: for the deuyll synneth since the beginning.
 For thys purpose appeareth the sonne of God, to loose the workes of the deuyll. Whosoener
 is borne of God, synneth not, for hys seed remaineth in hym, and he can not synne, because he
 is borne of God. In this are the children of God knowne, and the children of the deuyll. Who-
 soever doeth not righteousnes, is not of God, neither he that loveth not hys brother.

The text.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

Sabes lette no man deceyue you, flatterynge you for your professynge the name of christians, as though that were ynowgh unto felicitie. He is not iust, that speaketh iustice with his mouthe, but he that in his lyfe and maners doeth iustice in dede, is iust, lyke as Christ also shewed himselfe in his saynges and doynges an example of all iustice. And he that truly and wholy cleaueth fast vnto him, absteyneth as much as he possible may, from all vncleannes of synes, and the purenes of maners selfe declareth hym to be the sonne of God, whiche is good by nature, and knoweth no synne. But he that synneth although he haue receyued the sacramentes of Christ, yet he is begotten of hys father the deuyll, whiche is the prince and auтор of all synne. hym whosoever foloweth, is lyke his father, in that same thing that he synneth in, & declareth hymselfe to be his sonne. God alio weth no felowshippe with synners, for he sent his sonne for thys intent into this worlde, to banquishe the woorkes of the deuyll, that is to saye, all thynges, that are contrarie repugnaunt agaynst the charitie of the gospel. Of Adam we are all boine endaungered with synnes: of God we are boine agayne by the seide of þe gospels doctrine. As longe as the strength of this seebe abyddeth in a man, he synneth not, neither can synne, that is to were, because the loue of god byddeth hym naye: whiche loue taugeth hym to the studye of well doynge, and calleth hym awaye from all desire of offensynge, in that he is the bevy true sonne of God: resemb'ing playnly the behauiour and disposition of his father and head. It is not the rite, it is not baptisme, it is not the sacramentes that deserue the children of God from the children of the deuyll, but the puritie of lyfe, and charitie, exprestyng and shewyng it selfe in wel doinges. It is not idle if it be there. He that sheweth not that, neither sheweth in his dede that he loueth his brother, he is not boine of God. If he were a lyuely membre of Christs body, he woulde haue loued the other membres, for whom Christ died.

The same

For this is the thynges, that ye heare from the beginninge, that ye shoulde loue one another, not as Capn whiche was of that secte, and hys brotheres. And wherfore shoulde he hys? Because his owne woikes were cruell, and hys brotheres good. aggrauaile not my brethren though the worlde haue you. We knowe, that we are translated from beaste vnto lyfe, because we loue the brethren. He that loueth not his brother abideth in beaste. Whosoever hateth hys brother, is a man slea. And ye knowe, that no man slea hath eternall life abiding in hym. Greedy perceyue we thus: because he gaue his lyfe for us: and we ought to geue oure lyues for the brethren. But whoso hath this worlde good and seeth his brother haue neede: and thurrough his compassion from hym: howe dwelleth the loue of God in hym?

This is the summe of Christen iustice: this is it, that Christ gaue first of all vnto vs: this is it which we set forth befoye al thynges vnto you, that you shoulde with louynge one an other declare youre selues to be the sours of God, & the disciples of Christ. For in dede the hate of the neighbour is a step vnto murther. And malice is cleane contrary repugnaunt to charitie. Cain was not the sonne of god, but was boine of the deuyll: why? because he went out of kynde from his good maker, and became lyke the deuyll, which beyng strecken with enuy, was the first that slewe man with deadly synge. Cain resembled the disposition of his father in sleaung Abel hys brother. But what was the cause of hys hate? Forsothe, because thei lyfe was not alyke, and therfore they were of a contrarye kynde, albeit after thei

their bodely kinred, they were naturall home brethren. They did bothe resemble their father. Abel was an innocent man, and kyndled to the studious mynde of well dooinge. Cain contrariwise haniunge conceined an hate against his brother, forcasted not howe to amende himselfe, but how to sea his brother. Lyke as in this case the wicked coulde not abyde the godlye, and the deuilles childe coulde not abyde þe childe of god, even so you ought to take it for no maruaile, brethren, though men geuen to the wo:ld be for sake you. They hate them that are gyltles. Let no man hate them againe.

They, forsomuche as they are bowed vnto deathe, and serue the antoz of deathe, imagine howe to put other to deathe. It is our parte to pitie them, and not to doe them one harme for an other. For in dede the charitie of the gospell hath ledde vs awaye from the studie of harme dooinge, vnto the studie of wel dooing: a by this token we know that we are predestinat vnto euerlasting life, a exempte from the tiranny of death, in þe we loue the brethren. He that loueth, bothe wissheth well a doeth well. The body lyueth by the breathe, the soule liueth by the spirite of Christ. Wher brotherly loue is not, there þe spirite of Christ is not. Whosoener therfore hateth his neighbour, he is deade a lyueth not inwardly. For although he haue a faithe, yet he hath a dead faith, where charitie is not present. Doe you make a flicke at the hating of your brother, as though it were a light faulte: he that hateth his brother is a manslayer. He hath not thrust his sword in him, he hath not poisoned hi, he hath not flouen vpon him, he hath not cursed him, but onely wisshed him euyl. Mans law doeth not damne him of manslaughter, but in gods sight he is already damned of manslaughter. He þe hath receyued hate ones in to his brest, as much as in him is, he is a manslayer. There are many kyndes of manslaughter: He that sleaeth with sworde, suffereth punishment even by temporall lawes. He that killeth with popson, is punished even of them that are wicked. But he that sicketh his brother with the darre of a venomous tongue, although he be quitte by mannes lawes from the crime of manslaughter, yet by the lawe of the gospel he is gyltie of manslaughter. He is as yet hitherto alyue, that the hater wissheth euil vnto, a yet he himselfe is al ready dead: That mans lyfe is safe, a this hath lost euerlastinge lyfe, being his owne murderour. Wyl you see brethren, howe muche we ought to be farre from the desire of harme dooing. Turne your eies to the example of Christ. He so loued vs, when we deserued nothinge, yea when we deserued deathe, that he spent his lyfe for vs. Howe muche more ought we to put out lyfe in daunger for the saluaciõ of our brethren, yf occasion so require: namely we that succede into Christ our shepherdes roome. He committed not his shepe vnto Peters keping, but when he had thusse sayed he loued him, a by and by he sheweth him þe kynde of death, that he might understande, that the saluaciõ of the flocke committed vnto his charge must be defended even with the losse of lyfe. But wil he spende his lyfe, that grudgeth to helpe with his money: doeth a mā thinke it amonghe, yf he hurt not his brother, yf he speake to him gently: Christ declared in his dedes, howe muche he loued vs. He þe seeth his brother wāt meate, clothe, drinke or lodging, a hath substance to releue his neede wthal, a is not moued with compassion, but as though it were no paynt of his charge, letteth him alone vnsuccoured: how cā it be beleued, þe the loue of god is in him. The heathē succoureth þe heathē, a doeth not þe being a Christiā succour thine euē christened.

The Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

Thou haste professed brotherly loue, and if thou haue it truly present with the, why doeth it ceasse in this case, whan thy brother is pyned with neede? Thou callest him brother, and shewest thou no token of brotherly affectio?

The firste

My babes, let vs not loue in word, neither in tong: but in dede & in deede. Whereby we knowe that we are of the beeryne, can quere out heates before hym. For if our heate conuinceth vs, as he is greater then our heate, and knoweth all thynges. Dearly beloved, if our heate conuinceth vs not, then haue we resorte to Gods warde: and wherfore we aske, the receiue of hym, because we kepe his commaundement, and do those thynges which are pleasant in his sight. And this is his commaundement, that we beloue on the name of his sonne Ihesus Christ, and loue one another, as he gaue commaundement. And he that keepeth his commaundement dwelleth in him, and he is him, and hereby we knowe that he abideth in vs, euen by the spirit which he hath geuen vs.

My babes let vs not loue one another in wordes onely. Let the loue be in the heart, rather than in the tongue: and let it expresse it selfe in dedes, rather than in speaking. Let this worde Brother be in our dayly communicacion, yea but that we may be true, let the dedes be answerably like to the communicacion: as often as occasion serueth, let vs declare a true brotherly loue to be in vs in dede. Let not our brother want any thing & we haue, whether he desire coate, or meate, or lodging, either cōforte, teaching or admonition. Thus if we doe with readie good willes, we shall knowe by this token, that we are the children of the trueth, and that we loue not countrefaytly, but purely. The trueth is Christe him selfe, vnto whose eyes we shall proue our conscience, & we be allowed bothe with God and men: and by our dedes men shall knowe, that there is no dissembled loue among vs: god loketh vpo the puritie of the harte. We shall succour our brothers neede, yea but so as we releue his necessitie, not to maintene his notorious prodigalitie: and we shall succour him willingly, without hope of reward to returne vnto vs therfore, nether for bayne glories sake. Whenne see not the mynde, but the mynde knoweth it selfe, and is seene vnto the eyes of god. If menne prayse vs, and a naughtie conscience condemne vs, howsoever we deceaue men, we can not escape the iudgement of God. Mans heart hath secret passages to and fro, and doubtfull lurking holes, but there is nothyng so hidde, and so close, but god perceeth it. He knoweth all thynges better than we: he knoweth our harte that made our harte. He hath eyes in euery place, that is present in euery place. Dearly beloved, yf our harte condemne vs not vnto god, yf our mynde be sincere and vprightly playne, yf we doe of a mere & a pure loue that we doe: suche as we shewe our selues towardes our neighbour, suche a one shall god shewe him selfe to vs. Yf we gladly and with a good wyll forgeue our brother his faulte, God shall easily forgeue vs our synnes also. Yf we readily grue vnto our needy brother, as often as he desireth our helpe, we shall with a sure trusty boldenes aske also of god, that whiche shall petteigne to saluacion and necessitie, nether shall he denye our askinges. Yf we saye vnto him: Forgeue vs our trespasses, as if we forgeue them that trespass against vs, and yet hate our brother inwardly: shall not our owne conscience by and by crye out against vs? with what face askest thou of god, that whiche thou deniest thy neighbour? with what mowthe askest thou the couenaunt, whan thou thy selfe performest not & conditione he promised to forgeue vs our trespasses, yea but so that we doe heartely forgeue

forgeue our brother his trespasses. If we saye with the mouthe, I forgeue hym, and yet kepe euyl wyllstyl in oure hearte: oure naughty conscience shall take awaye our confidence of obteynynge, the thinge that we aske of God. If we bydde our brother gently, God speake, and helpe him not whan he hath nede of our helpe, we maye not hope that God will helpe, sence we helped not our brother: If we turne the deafe eare towards at hys commaundement, he will turne the deafe eare againe towards our prayers. It is a shamelesnes, not a godlynnes, to desire fauour of hym, whose commaundementes a man doeth nor passe vpon. But and if we obserue his commaundementes, if we doe whatsoeuer shall please him, and so doe, that we may be allowed in his eyes, whiche seeth euery thing: heresof shall we conceaue a sure confidence to obteyne. Here will the Jewe, the superstitious law keeper, saye vnto me: I kepe the sabborth dayes, I am washen, I faste, I absteyne from forbydden meates, I dooe not steale, God shall heare me. But thys is not the commaundement that I take of: which than forsothe that we shoulde repose all the whole hope and confidence of oure saluacion in Iesu Christ the sonne of God, by whome the fathers wyll was to geue all thinges frely vnto vs. Is thys ynough now? No forsothe: but we must loue eche one other according to his example. So he commaunded, but that whiche he commaunded, he did first performe himselfe in dede. He doeth not yet truly loue Christ, that hateth the membze of Christ: he doeth not yet loue Christ, that witheth euil to the man, for whome Christ died. Therfore he that kepeth that one only commaundement of loue, kepeth all. With this glue shall we be fast ioyned to Christ, so that he be in vs, and we againe in him. He by hys spirite shall dwell in oure hartes, if charitie bee warme there: The spirite of Christ is not the auer of hate, but the free genour of brotherly loue. He by the layinge on of thapostles handes is powered in to them that are baptised, but he leapech backe and flyeth awaye, if charitye happen to bee quenched out. By thys token therfore we shall perceaue that the gifte of the spirit, which we toke in baptisme, abyderh in vs, if brotherly loue contynue with vs still. Loke howe manche charitie wareth colde, so manche will the holy goosse withdraue him selfe awaye.

The iiii. Chapter.

Dearely beloved, beleue not euery spirit: but proue the spiritcs, whether they bee of god or not, for many falsc prophetes are gone out into the worlde. Wherby shall ye knowe the spirit of god. Euery spirit that confesseth that Iesus Christ is come in the fleshe, is of god. And euery spirit, which confesseth not that Iesus Christ is come in the fleshe, is not of god. And this is that spirit of Antichrist, of whome ye haue heard, howe that he shoulde come: and euen nowe already is he in the worlde.

The firste



I haue geuen you a token, dearely beloved, whereby you may perceaue, whether the spirit of Christ be in you or not. For there are sondry sortes of spiritcs in me, yea but dissembling spiritcs, and naughty spiritcs. Therfore doe not blindly beleue euery spirit. There are many here and there, that boast them selues to haue the spirit of God, but trye you whether they procede of God or not. Thys wolde hath also a spirit of hys owne, and pretendeth as though he had the spirit of God.

The Paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

The spirite of God enspireth the prophetes, but there are to manye false prophetes now that are gon out in to the worlde, and falsely saye that they speake by the inspiration of the spirit of God, when they are ledde with the spirit of the worlde. Will you therfore haue a more certayne argument of the spirit of God: heare the speaker, and you shall vnderstande. Euery spirit which confesseth, that Iesus Christe the autor of euerlasting saluation promysed long a goe vnto the worlde, is now all ready come, hauing receyued a very humayne body, like as he had promysed by his prophetes, he is of God, in that he acknowlaged the sonne of God. Contrary wille he that denyeth this, forasmuche as he is a lyer, he is not of God. For no man doeth truly professe the sonne, onles he be enspired of the father. But those doe not onely denye him, which speake against him in woordes openly, but also they that lye after such a sorte, as though Christe were not the example of godhynes vnto men, or as though he were not the autor of perfitte saluation: and so they seine some other Messias to be looked for, because Christes doctrine is so muche variable from theyr greedy luses. If he woulde haue fauoured the voluptuous pleasures of the flesh, if he woulde haue promysed great substance of riches, if he woulde haue geuen honours and empires of this world, they woulde haue long a goe acknowlaged their Messias. But now forasmuche as he doeth teache men to despise these thinges, and telieth them to take vp theyr crosse, and telieth that all felicitie must be looked for in the worlde to come, they deny him to be the olde promysed redeemer of mankinde, and bydde loke for an other, that shoulde promyse the commodities of the bodye, and the goodes of this worlde. Whether is it ynough to confesse Christ, onles we confesse him all wholly and entirely. He that denyeth him, either takinge awaye the diuine nature, whiche he hath all one with the father: or the humaine nature, which he toke of a woman bys mother, that spirit is not of God, but is the spirit of Antichrist, of the whiche spirit ye haue all ready hearde, that he shoulde come, yea he is now come already, and hathe to doe in them, whiche being addicte to worldly delices, fight agaynst the spirit of Christe.

The tenth

Evill children, ye are of God, and haue overcome them: for greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the worlde. They are of the worlde therfore speake they of the worlde, and the worlde heareth them. We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth vs: he that is not of god, heareth vs not. Wherby knowe we the spirit of verite, and the spirit of erroure. Dearly beloued, let vs loue one another: for loue cometh of god. And euery one that loueth, is borne of God, and knoweth God. He that loueth not, knoweth not god: for God is loue. In this appeared the loue of god to vs worde, because that God sent his onely begotten sonne into the worlde, that we might lue rhymowch m. Wherby is loue, not that we loued God, but that he loued vs, and sent his sonne to make agment for our synnes.

There is no cause why you should be afrayed of these sortes of men, I tell children. Forasmuche as you are of god, and haue his spirit: you haue by him overcome the Antichristes. In dede you of youre selues are but weake, but he that dwelleth in you, is greater and myghtier than he, that dwelleth in the worlde. The deuill fighteth agaynst you by his membres, but God by his spirit defendeth you. They, forasmuche as they petteyne to the fashion of the worlde, and haue receyued the spirit of the worlde, are wisely skilled in the worlde, and talke of worldly matters, and their doctrine is acceptable gear vnto them, which are also geuen them selues vnto the worlde. No man dooeth lyghtly beleue, that he is an enemye to those things

things, whiche he vehemently loveth. They loue earthie thynges, & their doctrine saoureth of the earth. **W**oe are of god, he that knoweth hym (in dede he knoweth him that loneth him) herkeneth vnto vs, whiche teache heauenly thynges, & matters worthy of god. He þ is not of god, heareth not vs, but abhorreth fro the gospelles doctrine, which biddeth me geue away their ryches, desye voluptuous pleasures, to reioyce in afflictions, to esteeme euen life it selfe of no value for righteousnes sake, & to loke for the rewarde of well done dedes in the resurrection, which they either beleue shal not come at all, or woulde not haue it to happen: which doctrine comaun- deth also throughth sincere loue to spend euen a mans lyfe for his neighbours sake, where as the man of a worldly spirite prouideth for his owne com- dition at al handes, yea euen with wronging of his brother. By these tokens therfore you may knowe the true spirite of god, from the false spirite of the worlde. Therfore dearly beloued, soasmuche as we are of god, & not of the worlde, let vs loue eche one other, & let euery one serue his neighbours profites rather than his owne. for loue is of god. He therfore that is garnis- shed with this loue, is borne of god, & doth truly knowe god. And he that is void of loue, hath not yet knowe god, because god himselfe is loue. He ge- ueth him selfe vnto vs, as often as he geureth vs his loue. He hath declared his loue to vs word, that we shoulde also declare ours towards our neigh- bour. But some man wil say: we acknowlege the sones charitie, but wher- by doe we knowe the fathers loue towards vs? for sothe by this: that he sent his onely sonne, (than the whiche he hath nothing more dearer) in to this worlde, & gaue him vnto death, that we by his death shoulde attayne euerylastyng lyfe. And this is also a greater and a more notable miracle of loue, that bringe prouoked by no good turne of ours, he loued vs so e nota- ble. He that loueth his louer agayne, is nothing but thankfull: and shoulde haue no humanitie except he dyd it. **W**e loued the worlde, and were turned from the loue of god: and yet God loued vs first and of hys owne accorde. And when he was iustly offended at oure synnes, neyther was there anye manne vpon yearth the boyde of synne, that coulde recendle vs vnto hym, (for it belongeth hym to be full of grace, that muste make intercession vnto hym that is offended, for suche as bee malefactoris) he sente hys sonne downe from heauen, to sacrifice hymselfe vnto the father, and with this most pure oblacion to make hym mercifull vnto vs. **W**hat canne be Imagined more notable than this loue? what can be thought more frequent: what can be imagined more plenteous?

Dearly beloued, if god so loued vs, we oughte also to loue one another. No man hath seene god at anye tyme. **I**f we loue one another, god dwelleth in vs, and hys loue is perfect in vs. **W**herby knowe we that we dwell in hym, and he in vs: because he hath geuen vs of hys spi- rite. And we haue seene, and doe regie, that the father sent the sonne to bee sauiour of the worlde: Whosoever confesseth, that Iesus is the sonne of god, in hym dwelleth god, and he in god. And we haue knowen, and beleue the loue that God hath to vs. God is loue: and he that dwelleth in loue, dwelleth in god, and god in hym. **W**herby is the loue per. cec in vs, that we shoulde haue trust in the daye of iudgement. For as he is, thus so serue we in this wyse. **T**here is no feare in loue, but perfect loue casteth out feare, for feare hath payn- fulnes. He that feareth, is not perfect in loue. **W**e loue hym, for he loued vs first. **I**f a man saye: I loue god, and yet hate his brother, he is a liar. For howe can he that loueth not his bro- ther whome he hath seene, loue god whome he hath not seene? And this commaundment haue we of him that he whome we loue god, shoulde loue his brother also.

The texte

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the .i. Epistle

Dearely beloued, yf God, whiche hathe no nede of vs, of hys owne accord and wyllingly hath so muche loued vs, we ought also after hys example to loue eche one other. The sonne of God shewed hym selfe vnto vs, but no man hath (ene God the father at any tyme with his bodily eyes, and yet he is perceyued by the euident tokens of thynges. We fele hym angrye, we fele hym mercifull, we fele hym to be absent, we fele hym to be present. We are hable to testifie our mutuall loue towarde God by none other argumente, than yf we loue euery one other, lyke as he hathe loued vs. He loued vs frely without cause, he loued vs for thys purpose, to saue vs. Yf we loue eche one other after such wise: god, which is loue, (as I sayed) abydeth in vs. It is a comune loue to beare good wil to him & deserueth well, to loue hym that is hable to requite oure loue, and to testifie our good wil with one good turne for an other: but & loue of god is persite towarde vs. He loued vs of his owne accord, he loued vs bring straungers, he loued vs, of whome no maner requitall coulde retorne to hym agayne, he loued vs eue to the losse of his onely begotten sone. If we loue our neighbour in a semblable wyse, than the loue of God is persite in vs, declaring also that God hymselfe is in vs. Lyke as all one spirite knytteth the members of the body together, and maketh them one body: euen so the spirite of god doeth in a maner glue together and knytte bothe vs with hym, and euery one to other, and as it were dyueth perforce all into one. And yf the spirite of god, which inspirith into our heartes & loue of our neighbour, be stronge in vs, doubtles we knowe by thys token, bothe that we abyde in God, and God lyke wyse in vs. Therefore he is an enemy vnto loue, that denieth Iesus to be the sonne of God, whiche gaue hymselfe to redeeme mankind. But of this matter we were euen lookers by, we sawe it with our eyes, we hearde it with our eares, we handled it with our handes, and of a matter so many waies prouedly knowe, we beare witnes to the whole worlde, that god sent his sonne, to saue the worlde with his death, in case it woulde repent from his olde errors, and ordie the life of it from henceforth accordyng to the rule of the gospel. For he dyd not onely sende hym to saue the nation of the Jewes, but he gaue hym also to be a saviour to all the whole worlde. He therefore that confesseth that Iesus is the sonne of god, whom the prophetes had prophesied before shoulde come, he abydeth in God, and god in him. For he knoweth the trueth, and embraceth loue. He acknowledgeth not the loue of God towarde him, that doeth no expresse it in his neighbour. But as for vs, we haue both knowen by experient, and beleue with our harte, and confesse wyth oure mouthe, and expresse in oure workes the dedes that God hath bestowed vnto vs. It remaineth, that we shoulde perseuer in that which is begonne, and not to offende, so as God be not bothe plucked awaye from vs, and wee drawen awaye from God. God (as I sayed before) is loue. Therefore he that continueth styll in loue, continueth styll in God, and God lyke wyse in hym: because the mutuall knotte of the spirite of God abideth. Wyl you also haue an other token geuen you, whereby you maye trye, whether the loue of god bee persite in you? If we knowe our owne conscience to be good, and that we dreade not the daye of iudgement, wherein they shall be seperated from Christ, that haue not folowed Christ. They shall quake, when they shal heare that hor-
rable

rible boſſe. Depart from me But we looke for that daye with a truſty bolde-
nes, that is to wete, knowing to our ſelues, þ̄ lyke as he was conuerſant
in the worlde, euen ſo are we alſo in the worlde. He toke no maner of ſpote
of the worlde, but cleaſed the worlde from it owne fylthyneſſe, and drew
it, as muche as in hym was, into hys purenes. Euen ſo wee alſo to oure
powers are not onely not mingled with þ̄ worlde, but alſo we rather drie
it, with teachyng of the goſpell, and chaſte examples of lyfe, vnto Chriſte.
The dreade of goddes iudgemente ſpryngethe out of an euyl conſcience.
Feare therfore agreeth not with loue. For loue encreaſeth aſſured confi-
dence: which, yf it be perſire, ſhal dryue quite out of minde al feare. But it is
glad, as often as that daye of iudgemente cometh in his mende: firſt ha-
uyn a very good opinion of the good God, and hauing it ſelfe a good con-
ſcience. Loue cauſeth gladneſſe, feare cauſeth tormentynge ſorrowfulneſſe.
Whoeuer he that is afrayed, declareth hymſelfe therein not yet to be per-
fite in loue. As much as wāteth vnto loue, ſo much encreaſeth to feare. For
he is afrayed, leſt he ſhall not fynde God the iudge mercyfull vnto hym,
ſeyng he ſheweth hymſelfe detracable vnto his neighbour. That daye ſhal
openly declare, who hath bene a true louer in thys worlde. We loue God:
and no meruaile, ſeyng he firſt loued vs. For we coulde not be hable to loue
hym, excepte he drew vs vnto hymſelfe with hys loue. Thys ſame there-
fore, that we loue God, is hys benefite. Finally, in that we loue God, we
teſtifie it in louinge oure neighbour in whome he wyll be loued. If a man
wyll ſaye: I loue God, when he hateth hys brother, he is a lyar. For when
the wycked, of whom for the moſte parte they doe not onely not loue God,
but alſo they beleue not that God is: yet for al þ̄ they after a ſort loue their
neighbour, either becauſe he is their kynſman or alliaunce, or becauſe he is
acquaynted and familiar with them, or at the leaſte becauſe man ſeeth the
other to be a man, lyke as the very beaſtes loue euery one hys owne kynd by
the inſtincte of nature: howe ſhall he loue God, whome he hath not ſene at
any tyme, whan he hateth hys neyghboure, whom he ſeeth? Furthermore
howe ſtander the together that he loueth God, that paſſeth not vpon the
commaundementes of God? If a man woulde crye: I loue the kyng, and
for al þ̄ ſetteth naught by the kynges proclamacions, woulde there any man
beleue hym? we haue thys ſpeciall commaundement of oure Emperoure,
that he whiche loueth God, ſhoulde alſo loue hys brother, whether he bee
good or badde. Yf he be good, let hym loue Chriſt in hym: yf he be badde, let
hym loue hym to thys ende, that he maye be conuerted vnto Chriſt.

The .v. Chapter.

Whoeuer beleeueth that Ieſus is Chriſt, is borne of God. And euery one that loueth hym
which begat, loueth hym alſo which was begotten of hym. By thys we knowe, that we loue
the children of God, when we loue God and kepe his commaundementes. For thys is the loue
of God, that we kepe hys commaundementes, and hys commaundementes are not greuouſe.
For all that is borne of God, overcometh the worlde. And thys is the victorie that overcom-
meth the worlde, euen our ſapth. Who is it that overcometh the worlde? but he whiche bele-
ueth, that Ieſus is the ſonne of God? This Ieſus Chriſt is he that came by water and bloud,
not by water onely but by water and bloude. And it is the ſpirit that beareth witnes, becauſe
the ſpirit is trueth. (For there are thre whiche beare recorde in heauen, the father, the word,
and the holy ghoſt. And theſe thre are one.) And there are thre whiche beare recorde in (earth)
the ſpirit, the water, and bloude: and theſe thre are one. Yf we receyue the witnes of men, the
witnes of Gods graces. For thys is the witnes of God (that is greater) whiche he hath ſent

The texte

of his sonne. He that beleueth on the sonne of God, hath the wittnes in himselfe. He that beleueth not God, hath made hym a lyar, because he beleued not the record that god gaue of his son. And this is the recorde, howe that God hath geuen vnto vs eternal lyfe, and this lyfe is in hys sonne. He that hath the sonne hath lyfe: & he that hath not the sonne of god, hath not lyfe.



Who soeuer beleueth that Iesus is Christ, that is to say, him of whom we must nedes aske al the succoures of our saluation, and beleueth that in his hearte: he is bozne of god, and is called alredy into the numbze of the sonnes of God: In dede he can not chose but loue, & is a sonne. Tha whosoever loueth him heartely that is & father, loueth him also & was bozne of him, that is to wete, his brother, with whome he hath all one commune father. By this toké we proue, that we doe truly loue & children of God, yf we first loue God him selfe heartely. For there is nothing truly loued, except it be loued for his sake. Than that we loue God, it shall euidently so appeare, yf we kepe his commaundementes, and kepe them chearfully and gladly: for his commaundementes are none otherwyse greuous. For what is greuous to the louer: what is greuous to him that goeth post haste to suche maner rewardes. The worlde objecteth terrible apparaunces of euilles, pouertie, banishment, flander, captiuenmentes, whippinges, deathes. It is a great fraye, but the victorie is made readye: For what soeuer is bozne of God, ouercometh the worlde. But with what furnitures doeth he overcome & worlde: with riches: with garisons of men: with engines of warre: with worldly learning: no, no: they overcome the worlde (as cruelly raging as it is) throughe a stedfast onely faith, wherwith they committe them selues wholly vnto God their protectour. Thy riches are snatched awaye, yea but what sayeth faith to that? *I thou haste a treasure in heauen.* Thou art throwen out to be a banished man, yea but the countrey of heauen loketh for his countreyman: Thy body is turmoyled with tormentes: yea, but with them, are bought everlasting loyes. Death is deuised for the: yea but after it shall folowe lyfe that neuer shall dye. Who is it than that overcometh the worlde: not a lord, not the riche man, not a philosopher, not a kyng, but he who soeuer he be, that beleueth verely, that Iesus is the sonne of God. Beleeue that which he hath promised, and it shall nothing moue thee, whatsoeuer the worlde purposeth against thee. He overcame the world first, & attayne dymortalitie: he came into this world hauing take our mortal body, to get the victorie for vs, to shew the meane of victorie getting, to cause & rewardes to be certainly reckoned vpon. But with what furnitures came he armed withall? He came by water and bloude, euen Iesus Christe: by water, that he myght washe vs cleane from our synnes: by bloude, that he myght geue vs immortall lyfe. Hys owne wyll was to be baptised, bringe cleane boyde from all synne, that he myght frely geue vnto vs innocencye: hys owne wyll was to dye on the crosse, that he myght open vnto vs the waye vnto immortallitie. He dyd not onely testifie by these two tokens, that he was Christ and the sauour of the worlde, in that he receyued baptism, as a synfull man: in that he dyed as a malefactor, whete he one onely & none among all but he, was Innocent from all synne: but the spirite also appearinge in the likenes of a doue, bare recorde of him, that it was he, who the father had geuen to be the sauour of the worlde. For the spirite is also the trueth, as the father and the sonne is: there is one trueth of all, like as there is one nature of all.

For there are three in heauen, that beare recorde vnto Christ, the father, the worde, and the spirite: the father, whiche sending once and eft sones a voice downe from heauen, testified openly, that he is his dearly beloued sonne, in whom nothing coulde doe amisse: the worde, whiche hauing done so many miracles, whiche in his death and resurrection declared him selfe to be the true Christ, bothe God and man, the peacemaker betwene God and men: the holy gooste, whiche descended vpon his head whan he was baptised, and that after his resurrection fell vpon his disciples. And of these three there is all one most perfite agreement: the father is the autor, the sonne the messenger, the holy goost the remembraunce. There are three thinges also on earth, that beare recorde vnto Christ: his humayne spirite whiche he put from him on the crosse: the water and the bloode, that ranne out of his syde whan he was deade. And these three witnessess doe agree. The other declared him to be God, these recorde that he was man. John also bare witness. And yf we receyue witnessse of men, it is reason, that the witnessse of God be of moze importunee with vs. For the testimonie of God the father is manifest: *This is my welbeloued sonne, in y whom I am pleased, heare him.* What thing can be spoken moze plainly or moze fully? he that beleueth truly in goddes sonne Iesus Christ, and hath reposed al the succours of his lyfe in him, so that trusting in his promisses he contemneth all thinges, that this worlde can make a shewe of, whether they be amiable or dreadfull, hath a witnessse in him selfe, and beareth witnessse vnto the sonne of God. For whan (through the inspiration of the spirite of Christ) he desieth euen deathes for his loue, he beareth no trifling witnessse vnto me, that they are no baine thiges that Christ hath taught and promised. He that trusteth not in god, but putteth his trust in the worlde, he, as muche as in him is, maketh god a lyer, whiche hath promised felicitie vnto them that woulde hecke vnto his sonne Iesu Christ: where as he in his conuersaciō teacheth that felicitie is to be asked of the worlde, & cleaueth so vnto the comodities of this lyfe, as though nothing of a man remayned after the deathe of the bodye. The father cryeth: *Heare him.* And his lyfe, that beleueth not, saith: *Heare the worlde.* For whan the sonne prayed the father, that those whiche beleued or shoulde beleue in him, might haue eternall lyfe, the fathers voyce was heard, testifying as by the sound of a trompet, that his prayers shoulde be allowed. The father therefore hath geuen vs euerclastyng lyfe, the winge of whome it shoulde be asked, euen of his sonne Iesus Christ. His doctrine who soeuer embraceth, his example whosoever foloweth, hys promyses whosoever trusteth vnto, he bothe possedeth the sonne and hath life: the pledge wherof he kepeth in the meane tyme, euen the spirite of god, through the vndoubted confidence whereof he is bolde to call God, father: he that is a stranger from the sonne, is estranged also from lyfe.

These thinges haue I written vnto you that beleue on the name of the sonne of god, that ye maye knowe, howe that ye haue eternall lyfe, and that ye maye beleue on the name of the sonne of god. And this is the trust that we haue in hym: that yf we aske any thyng accordyng to hys will, he heareth vs. And yf we knowe that he heare vs whatsoeuer we aske, we knowe, that we haue the petitions, that we desire of hym. All any man see his brother sinne a synne not vnto deathe, let hym aske, and he shall geue hym lyfe for them that sinne not vnto deathe. There is a synne vnto deathe, for whiche I saye I not that a man shoulde praye. All vnrighteousnes is sin, and ther is a synne not vnto deathe. We knowe, that whosoever is borne of god, synneth not: but he that is begotten of god, hepereth himselfe, and that wicked toucheth hym not. We knowe, that we are of god, and the worlde is all together set on wickednes. We knowe, that the sonne of god is come, and hath geuen vs a mynde to knowe hym, whiche is true: and yett are in him charis true, through his sonne Iesus Christ. This same is very god, and eternall lyfe. Woe, hope your selues from images. Amen.

The testi.

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

These thinges therfore doe I repute and beate vnto you with so many wordes, lest any man shoulde perswade vnto you the contrarye. But take it for a sure and an vndoubted certayntie, that it is true whiche you haue beleued: that euerlastyng lyfe is ordayned for you throughe Iesus Christe, whose ioyned felowe heires you are. You haue already the ryght clayme and gage, and shall haue possession of the thyng selfe in hys tyme. Therefore you that beleue in the sonne of God, beleue steadfastlye, and put youre sure trust in hym daylye more and more. He wyll not fayle you in the promyses of euerlastyng lyfe, that fayleth you not now euen in thys lyfe. for in dede the spirite of Christe geueth this confidence vnto you, that whatsoeuer you shal aske in the name of the son, you shoulde obtaine it, if ye aske according to hys wyll, that is, yf you be suche when you come to praye as he woulde haue you to come: that is to saye, pure from all maner hate of your brother. (for he obteyneth nothyng at goddes hande, of whom his neyghbour obteyneth not forgiveness of his fault) and yf you aske those thynges that are auailable to the lyfe of heauen, and make to the glozve of Christ. So elles we for the moste parte knowe not what we shoulde aske of God, and many tymes for holosome thynges we desire hurtfull thynges, yf the spirite of Christe put vs not in mynde, what were expedient for vs to aske: but as ofte as we aske after thys sorte, we are sure that god heareth oure prayers: we are sure that he wyll frely geue vs whatsoeuer we shal aske. So hath he promised vs, and is hable to performe whatsoeuer he promyseth, and wyll performe whatsoeuer is hellesome for vs. Neither shall he ouely encrease his giftes in vs, bring prouoked therunto by oure prayers, but also he wyll pardon vs oure daylye offences, without whome the feblenes of mans nature can scarcely be hable to endure longe: and he shall not ouely pardon euery one hys offences, yf he desire pardon, but he shall also heare the brother praying for the brothers offences, so that the sturme bee of suche sorte, that it doeth not quench the brotherly loue, although it doe somewhat obscure it. for there is a synne that cannot bee imputed vnto weakenes, nor be healed with lyght and easye remedies: as whan a manne vpon a sette malyce persecuteth the christen felowshyppe, where he hymselfe hath professed Christe, and in pretence of religion goeth aboute to subuert religio. The desperate frowardnes of suche a one deserueth not the prayer of godly menne: and yet perfite charitie prayeth also for suche, wyshynge for those thynges that cannot possiblye be done. There is no manne that prayeth for the deuyll, because he doeth wiltynglye throughe malyce opponge them, whome God woulde well vnto. Perhappes, no prayer shoulde also be made for them, that are translated into hys affection: and are rather to be shunned, that they doe no harme, than to bee releued with prayers, excepte they shewe an hope of their repentance. Suche a disease needeth more strong remedies, and is greater, than can bee taken away by daylye prayers, wherby lighter offences are taken away, which are done of feble weakenes, & not of purposed frowardnes. Whatsoeuer is committed besyde perfite righteousness, is sin: but there be many differences of synnes. There is some synne, whiche although it demynyssheth and blotte innocenye, yet it vterlye quencheth not out christian charytee: as whan by occasion we ouerthote a worde agaynste oure frende, whiche we

we are soꝝ by and by that it ouer shot vs: when a sodayne angre hath rushed out at a woꝝde, that wee woulde wythe by and by myghte bee called backe agayne: when throughe the sweetenes of meate or drynke recꝑuyng, wee take somewhat more then the necessitie of nature doeth require. And to pardon these offences God is easie, yf he bee called vpon with mutual prayers. Suche maner of faultes of children, those that be geneyll parentes doe for the moste parte wyne at, whiche woulde not suffre greater offences. Albeit there is none so lyght a faulte that ought to be neglected. Whatsoeuer is done amysse, is euyl and to bee eschewed of godlye folkes, and yf it bee neglected, it draweth by lytell and lytell vnto deathe. But lyke as spedy remedy oughte to be had for these lighter offences, whiche men are scarce hable to auoyde: euen so god forbydde, that he whiche hath once renounced the woꝝlde, and dedicated hymselfe vnto god, shoulde be troubled backe agayne into anye greate notable crime. By professing of þe gospel we are made the chyldꝛe of God, and membes of Christ. And it is not conuenient, that the chyldꝛen shoulde distre so greatly from the father, and the membes from the head. Therfoꝛe he that throughely vnderstandeth, that he is borne of god, taketh more hede that he doe no euyl, than of deathe it selfe: and kepeth hymselfe that he haue nothyng a doe with that naughtie loꝝde (dewill) whom he serued befoꝛe together with the woꝝlde. Lyke as Christe beynge once dead rose agayne to lyfe, and rose agayne to lyfe neuer to dye any more: euen so he that throughe baptism is once dead vnto the woꝝlde, and risen agayne to newnes of lyfe with Christ, it is not mete for hym to doe that thyng agayne, for the whyche Christe must dye agayne. Let them be affrayed of the woꝝlde, whiche are not truly borne agayne of god: whiche haue not with al the pith of their whole heares receyued the seede of the gospels doctrine. We knowe, that wee are truly of god, whome neyther the euyl thynges nor the good thynges of thys woꝝld can seperate from Christe. The whole woꝝld is set all together on naughtines. Whiche waye soeuer a man turneth hym, there is occasion offred of thynges to turne vs awaye quite from the innocent bꝑryghtnes of lyfe. But from the woꝝldes enchauntmentes the sonne of god hath once deiuered vs: whiche came into the woꝝlde for thys cause, to exempte vs out of the contagious infection of the woꝝlde. He hathe dꝑuen awaye the darkenes of oure former ignorance, and hathe geuen vs an vnderstanding that is lyghtened with the lyght of the gospel: to thintent we shoulde knowe the true god & the free geuer of al rightousnes: who onely had nothyng a doe with the woꝝlde: and we are in hym truly, in that we folowe hys doctrine and promyses with an bꝑryght conscience, as longe as wee are in hys sonne Iesus Christe, whome he sent into the woꝝlde for that intent. He is the true god, whiche onely ought to be honoured: and the true lyfe, whiche onely oughte to bee desyred. Lytell chyldꝛen, yf you doo trulye knowe the true God, beware of faile goddes, and bayne Images, whyche the woꝝlde hath in honoure. He wurshyppeth an Idole, that maketh moneye hys God. He wurshyppeth an Idole, that maketh hys bely hys God. He wurshyppeth an Idole, that for woꝝldelye honoures sake, despysethe the commaundementes of God. There be manye suche

The paraphrase of Erasmus vpon the first Epistle

kyndes of Images. Beware you of all, of you wyll abyde in the worshippe
of the true God. 3a. by the humble prayer of myne he vouchsafe to
make good, by whose goodnes wee are deliuered from
oure erreours. Amen.

Thus endeth the Paraphrase vpon the first
epistle of Sainer Iohn.